

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ADP-00 MC-02 IGA-02 AID-20 OMB-01

TRSE-00 CIAE-00 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 RSR-01 /111 W

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R 252000Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6764

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 1252

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, HA

SUBJ: GOH REQUEST FOR US MILITARY MATERIEL TO REPLACE FIRE LOSSES

REF: P-AU-P 1248

1. IN RESPONDING TO THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST FOR AMMUNITION AND MORTARS TO REPLACE LOSSES IN JULY 23 NATIONAL PALACE ARMORY FIRE, I HOPE THAT DEPARTMENT AND DOD WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE QUICKEST POSSIBLE ACTION. AS REPORTED REFTEL, EMBASSY DEFENSE ATTACHE CONSIDERS LIST A REASONABLE STATEMENT OF HAITIAN ARMED FORCES CURRENT REQUIREMENTS AND STRONGLY RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF SALE. FOLLOWING ARE SOME FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS WHICH LEAD ME TO URGE APPROVAL SOONEST:

A. JULY 23 FIRE APPEARS TO HAVE DESTROYED NEARLY ALL OF GOH'S STOCKS OF AMMUNITION FOR SMALL ARMS AND MORTARS, LEAVING HAITIAN ARMED FORCES INCAPABLE OF MORE THAN A FEW MINUTES OF SUSTAINED COMBAT. ARMED FORCES NOW CANNOT PERFORM THEIR MOST ELEMENTARY NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE MISSION.

B. IF THE AMMUNITION SUPPLY IS NOT REPLENISHED SOON, THE LOCAL RUMOR MILL WILL GRIND ON WITH REPORTS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S VULNERABILITY TO COUPS, INVASION ATTEMPTS, ETC., AND THE LOCAL POLITICAL SITUATION WILL BE RENDERED

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MORE UNSTABLE.

C. THE QUANTITIES OF AMMUNITION REQUESTED ARE NOT EXCESSIVE FOR HAITI'S MOST BASIC NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENSE NEEDS.

D. IF THE GOH IS FORCED TO BUY FROM "FAST-BUCK" PRIVATE ARMS DEALERS, AS IN THE PAST, IT WILL WASTE MONEY BUYING JUNK (AND PERHAPS DANGEROUS JUNK AT THAT) AND ENRICH SPECULATORS.

E. THE HAITIAN GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO PAY FOR ITS REQUIREMENTS, AND THERE IS NO REASON WHY THE US SHOULD NOT GET THE SALE.

2. ALSO, GOH REQUEST SEEMS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN US INFLUENCE EVEN MORE WITH THE GOH FOLLOWING ON THE GUANTANAMO FIREFIGHTING EFFORT AND TO WIN THE GOODWILL OF INDIVIDUAL HAITIAN MILITARY OFFICERS. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT THE LATTER IS A MAJOR OBJECTIVE IN THE FY 1973-74 CASP FOR HAITI.

3. IN VIEW OF FOREGOING CONSIDERATIONS, REQUEST EXTRA-ORDINARY EFFORT TO EXPEDITE PAPER WORK AND ACCELERATE APPROVAL OF SALE. IF WE CANNOT INFORM GOH OF OUR APPROVAL OF SALES WITHIN A MATTER OF DAYS, HAITIANS ARE VIRTUALLY CERTAIN TO SEARCH ELSEWHERE FOR WHAT THEY OBVIOUSLY CONSIDER AN EXTREMELY URGENT AND ESSENTIAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENT. CORCORAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: worrelsw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PORTA01252
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS CORCORAN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730712/aaaaaifk.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: worrelsw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <28 FEB 2002 by worrelsw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOH REQUEST FOR US MILITARY MATERIEL TO REPLACE FIRE LOSSES
TAGS: MASS, HA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005